

1 CLAIMS

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3 1. A mat comprising a pile surface fabric and a
4 rubber or rubber-like backing material connected to
5 said pile surface fabric, wherein both the pile surface
6 fabric and the backing material extend to the edge of
7 the mat, and wherein the pile surface fabric is
8 provided with a border portion having on its upper
9 surface a contrasting colour and/or texture to the
10 remainder of the pile surface fabric and extending
11 along at least a portion of the edge of said pile
12 surface fabric.

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14 2. A mat according to Claim 1, wherein the border
15 portion of the pile surface fabric extends along the
16 entire perimeter of the pile surface fabric.

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18 3. A mat according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the edge
19 of the mat comprises a cut edge, whereby the cut edge
20 is the result of a single cutting operation through the
21 pile surface fabric and the backing material.

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23 4. A mat according to any preceding Claim, wherein
24 the backing material is vulcanised to the pile surface
25 fabric.

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27 5. A mat according to any preceding Claim, wherein
28 the border portion has on its upper surface a
29 contrasting colour, the border portion comprising a
30 printed portion of the pile surface fabric, a portion
31 of the pile surface fabric produced using pre-dyed
32 yarns, a portion of the pile surface fabric produced by
33 selective melting of the yarns in the pile surface
34 fabric, or a portion of the pile surface fabric
35 screened from a printing or dyeing process applied to

1 the remainder of the pile surface fabric by selective
2 application of a liquid repellent to the border
3 portion.

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5 6. A mat according to any one of Claims 1 to 4,
6 wherein the border portion has on its upper surface a
7 contrasting texture, the border portion comprising a
8 portion of the pile surface fabric having reduced pile
9 height produced by selective melting, mechanical
10 carving or chemical treatment of the yarns in the pile
11 surface fabric.

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13 7. A method for manufacturing a mat comprising a pile
14 surface fabric and a rubber or rubber-like backing
15 material connected to said pile surface fabric,
16 comprising the steps of:

17 bonding a pile surface fabric to a rubber or
18 rubber-like backing material, the pile surface fabric
19 having elongate areas of contrasting surface colour
20 and/or texture,

21 cutting through the pile surface fabric and
22 backing material along at least one of said elongate
23 areas to form a mat, wherein the cut portion of the
24 elongate area forms a border portion of the mat.

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26 8. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the pile
27 surface fabric has longitudinal and transverse elongate
28 areas of contrasting surface colour and/or texture
29 forming a grid on the pile surface fabric.

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31 9. A method according to Claim 7 or 8, wherein the
32 pile surface fabric and backing material are cut along
33 two longitudinal and two transverse elongate areas to
34 form a substantially rectangular mat.

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1 10. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 9,
2 wherein the bonding step is achieved by vulcanization
3 of the rubber backing layer to the fabric.

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5 11. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 10,
6 wherein the method includes the step of using a visual
7 scanning means to scan the pile surface fabric and
8 identify the position of the elongate areas.

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10 12. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 10,
11 wherein the method includes the step of using a
12 mechanical guide sensor, to identify the position of
13 the elongate areas in the case when the elongate areas
14 are sculpted or carved, by physically sensing the
15 change in height of the pile surface fabric.

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17 13. A method according to Claims 11 or 12, wherein the
18 method also includes the step of using an electronic
19 control means to guide a cutting means to cut through
20 the pile surface fabric and backing material along a
21 cutting line having a predefined position with respect
22 to the position of the elongate area.

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24 14. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 13,
25 wherein the areas of contrasting surface colour and/or
26 texture are areas of contrasting surface colour, the
27 areas of contrasting colour being achieved by a method
28 step selected from the following:
29 printing or dyeing the pile surface fabric, either
30 before or after the bonding step;
31 forming the pile surface fabric with areas which
32 comprise pre-dyed yarns;
33 selectively applying heat on the pile surface fabric,
34 wherein the fabric comprises a blend of fibres of
35 polymers having different melting points, either before

1 or after the bonding step;
2 selectively applying chemicals containing a liquid
3 repellent on the pile surface fabric, wherein the
4 fabric is subsequently rewetted by the application of
5 liquid and subject to heat treatment to carve the areas
6 to which liquid repellent has been applied, either
7 before or after the bonding step; or
8 selectively applying chemicals to carve the upper
9 surface of the pile surface fabric and reveal a lower
10 portion of the pile surface fabric having a contrasting
11 colour to the colour of the fibres at the upper surface
12 of the pile surface fabric.

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14 15. A method according to any one of Claims 7 to 13,
15 wherein the areas of contrasting surface colour and/or
16 texture are areas of contrasting surface texture, the
17 areas of contrasting texture being achieved by the step
18 of selectively carving areas of the pile surface
19 fabric, either before or after the bonding step.

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21 16. A method according to Claim 15, wherein the
22 carving is carried out by acid carving, mechanical
23 carving or shearing.

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25 17. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the
26 carving is carried out by applying a degrading agent to
27 the pile fibres in the area to be carved, heating the
28 pile fabric to cause degradation of the pile fibres and
29 mechanically removing the degraded fibres.

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31 18. A method according to Claim 16, wherein the
32 carving is carried out by the step of selective
33 application of chemicals containing a liquid repellent
34 on the pile surface fabric, wherein the fabric is
35 subsequently rewetted by the application of liquid and

- 1 subject to heat treatment to carve the areas to which
- 2 liquid repellent has been applied, either before or
- 3 after the bonding step.

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